



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **VIRGINIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONCEALING TIES TO MILITANT GROUPS AND BOMB TRAINING IN HIS U.S. CITIZENSHIP APPLICATION**

ALEXANDRIA, VA -- Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Allan J. Doody, Special Agent-in-Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Washington D.C., and Michael Mason, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office, announced the plea yesterday of Maher Amin Jaradat, a 43-year-old Israeli-born Palestinian and naturalized U.S. citizen, to fraudulently procuring U.S. citizenship.

He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine when sentenced on September 2, 2005, by the Honorable T.S. Ellis III, United States District Court Judge. On May 17, 2005, a federal grand jury in Alexandria returned a one-count indictment charging Jaradat with unlawful procurement of citizenship. Jaradat entered the United States in June 1988 as a visitor and later married an American citizen.

ICE and FBI special agents assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force conducted the investigation that resulted in the arrest and indictment of Jaradat. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Gordon Kromberg and Special Assistant Heather Schmidt.

Jaradat submitted an application for U.S. citizenship with immigration authorities in March 1995 and, in June 1995 appeared before immigration authorities where he swore under oath that the contents of the application were true, even though he knew the application contained false statements.

He also failed to disclose that he had been a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) for 16 months beginning in 1980; that he had also studied bomb-making and the use of small arms at a training camp in Syria run by DFLP, an organization involved in terrorist activities; and that he had engaged in security duties in Lebanon.

Jaradat also did not disclose that, beginning in 1981, he had also been a member of al-Fatah, an organization responsible for numerous terrorist attacks and airplane hijackings

In addition, Jaradat falsely claimed that he had never been arrested, cited, charged, indicted, convicted, fined or imprisoned for breaking or violating any law or ordinance, when in fact, he had been arrested for assault and battery in the City of Alexandria in 1990.

U.S. Attorney McNulty said, "Our citizens have a right to know if an immigrant to this country has been associated with terrorist organizations. Catching and punishing those who enter this country under false pretense is a major element of our terrorism prevention strategy."

"U.S. citizenship is a privilege. Those who attempt to gain it through fraud, especially by concealing their affiliation with violent militant groups, will be pursued vigorously by ICE," said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Doody.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*